

REMARKS

The last Office Action has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1, 5-12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 over the patent to Oliwa.

Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 104 over the patent to Oliwa.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over the patent to Oliwa.

At the same time the Examiner indicated that claim 13 is generally allowable.

The Examiner's indication of the allowability of claim 13 has been greatfully acknowledged. In connection with this indication, this claim has been canceled and replaced with a new claim 15 which contains the subject matter of the canceled claim. Claim 15 should be considered as being in allowable condition.

After carefully considering the Examiner's grounds for the rejection of the claims over the art, applicant has somewhat amended claim 1, the broadest claim on file, to more clearly define the present invention.

It is believed to be advisable before the analysis of the prior art to explain in detail the subject matter of the present invention. In the inventive appliance as defined in claim 1 there is a central region provided with a throughgoing opening 15 in which the indicating device is received. In addition, it has a surrounding edge region 20 which surrounds the throughgoing opening 15 and is depressed relative to the outer surface of the appliance, for receiving a decorative part 25. Thus, these two regions serve different purposes and receive different elements. This provides for an important advantage that the decorative part which surrounds the indicating device can be easily exchanged by a user and replaced with another one, without removing and exchanging the complete indicating device or a complete display module.

Turning now to the references and particularly to the patent to Oliwa, it can be seen that this reference discloses an electronic device including a display module. The display module is releasably connected with the electronic device, so that the display module can be removed from the electronic device for reading. The display module surrounds the display

element and several operating elements. The electronic device includes a throughgoing opening in which the complete display module is insertable. In this reference, the throughgoing opening in the electronic device serves for receiving of the complete display module, or in other words both the display element and a surface which surrounds the display element and is provided with the operating elements.

In contrast to the construction defined in claim 1, this reference does not disclose a surrounding edge region which surrounds the throughgoing opening in the central region of the electronic device and which is depressed relative to the surface of the device. It seems that the Examiner interpreted the inner wall of the throughgoing opening as the edge region, and thereby the throughgoing opening itself. However, as defined in claim 1, the surrounding edge region is not a limiting wall which forms the throughgoing opening, but instead is a surrounding region which surrounds the throughgoing opening and therefore is different from the throughgoing opening. Such surrounding edge region is not disclosed in the reference. Thereby from this reference, in contrast to claim 1, it is also not obvious to insert a decorative part on the surrounding edge region and connect it by releasable connection with the surrounding edge region. In contrast, the reference discloses a releasable connection of the complete display module in the throughgoing opening.

As explained hereinabove, the throughgoing opening of the applicant's device serves exclusively for receiving the indicating device, while the surrounding edge region which surrounds the throughgoing opening serves for receiving the decorative part. The throughgoing opening as defined in claim 1 does not receive a complete display module with an indicating device and a decorative part. If the indicating device in accordance with Figure 1 of the reference is identified with reference numeral 32 and arranged in the display module, then in accordance with this reference, the throughgoing opening for receiving the indicating device does not coincide with the throughgoing opening for receiving of the complete display module. Moreover, in this reference, the throughgoing opening for receiving the indicating device, or in other words the display element is located in the display module itself. This throughgoing opening is however not executed in the reference, as well as the surrounding edge region of the display module which surrounds the throughgoing opening.

It is believed to be clear that the new features of present invention as defined in the amended claim 1 are not disclosed in this reference and can not be derived from it as a matter of obviousness. The reference also does not provide the above mentioned highly advantageous results or separate removal and exchange of the decorative part only by a user. Therefore, it is believed that the Examiner's rejection of the original

claims over this reference should be considered as no longer tenable and should be withdrawn.

The patent to Satou and Evans disclose an electrical device with a removable display. In both references however no surrounding edge region is provided, which surrounds the throughgoing opening and is depressed relative to the surface of the device. This references also do disclose a decorative part insertable into such a surrounding edge region and mountable on the edge region by a releasable connection. These references do not come closer to the currently claimed subject matter than the above discussed Oliwa reference.

The patent to Schultz discloses a hand-held device with a displaying module having a display element and operational keys. The display module can be completely changed. Also, only the display element can be exchanged. In contrast to this construction, the device in accordance with the present invention has a surrounding edge region which surrounds the throughgoing opening for receiving the indicating device and which is depressed relative to the surface of the appliance. A decorative part is inserted in the surrounding edge region and mounted to the surrounding edge region by a releasable connection. In contrast, a throughgoing opening for receiving the display element is provided in this reference in the display

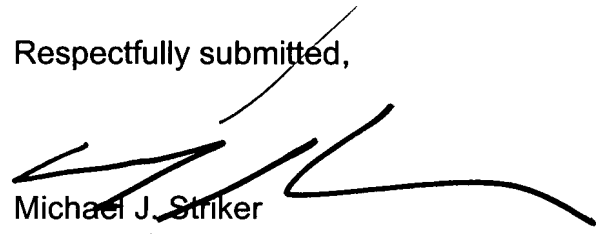
module. An edge region which surrounds said throughgoing opening is not disclosed in this reference, and therefore no decorative part can be mounted on such a surrounding edge region. This reference also does not teach the new features of present invention which are defined in the amended claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 should be considered as patentably distinguishing over the art and should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of present application is most respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place this case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment, and the case be passed to issue. Any costs involved should be charged to the deposit account of the undersigned (No. 19-4675). Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a

personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, he is invited to telephone the undersigned (at 212-687-5068).

Respectfully submitted,



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